

days later to Austen, ' Every possible claim that could be made upon me has poured in during the last two months. . . . I never have been so distressed.'

*To William Pyne.*

BRADENHAM,  
April 23, 1837.

I conclude from your interview, that the game is up, and that our system has failed. I assure you that the only feelings that I have at this moment are regret for your unavailing exertions, which I feel no professional remuneration can compensate, and gratitude for the generous zeal with which you have served me for the now not inconsiderable period of our acquaintance, and of which I believe few men were capable, and certainly no other lawyer. I am sure that your kind feelings and your matchless energy have effected all that was possible, and that you have been baffled only by circumstances which could not be foreseen, and over which you had no control.

Eventually, with the assistance of his father, some *modus vivendi* was discovered; but he shrank from revealing to his father, who was 'one of the old school,' the full complexity of a situation which 'he has long taught me to look upon with the greatest apprehension and mortification'; and the arrangement now effected, though it procured the distracted author a certain breathing space, was uneasy and precarious enough.

Such were the unpromising conditions under which *Venetia* was conceived and written. The agreement with Colburn is dated December 20, and a little earlier, as we have seen, Disraeli expected to have the novel finished by the end of the year : but again and again in those disturbed months his hopes were disappointed and the spring was far advanced before his task was completed.

*To Lady Blessington.*

BRADENHAM,

*March* 21. [1837.]

In spite of every obstacle in the shape of  
harassed feelings and other disagreeable  
accidents of life, I have not forgotten